

REMARKS

In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, reconsideration of the rejections contained in the Office Action of January 21, 2004. is respectfully requested.

The Examiner has rejected elected claims 1-6, 10-16, 21-24, 32-36, 41, and 53 under 35 USC § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. In particular, the Examiner asserts that the phrase "of a type" in line 1 of claim 1 renders the claims indefinite. In view of these rejections, and in order to place the original claims in a preferred form, original claims 1-53 have been cancelled and replaced with new claims 54-84, including new independent claim 54. All of the new claims read on elected Species III, and all of the new claims have been drafted so as to address the Examiner's formal rejections and so as to fully comply with all of the requirements of 35 USC § 112. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that the Examiner's rejections under § 112 are not applicable to the new claims.

The Examiner has rejected original claims 1-6 and 53 as being unpatentable over the Sonobe reference (USP 6,012,538) in view of the Mercat reference (USP 4,966,380); and has rejected claims 10-13 as being unpatentable over the Sonobe reference and the Mercat reference, and further in view of the Sink reference (USP 5,678,668). However, the Examiner has also indicated that claims 14-16, 21-24, 32-26, and 41 contain allowable subject matter.

In view of the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter, new independent claim 54 has been drafted to include all of the subject matter of original base independent claim 1 and allowable dependent claim 14. Although not *all* of the limitations of intervening claims 10-12 are incorporated into new independent claim 54, the features of intervening claims 10-12 that were necessary to support the subject matter of allowable dependent claim 14 have been incorporated into new independent claim 54. Furthermore, as indicated by the Examiner, it is submitted that the prior art of record does not disclose or suggest the subject matter of allowable dependent claim 14 now incorporated into new independent claim 54. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that new independent claim 54 and the claims that depend therefrom are clearly patentable over the prior art of record.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is submitted that the present application is now in condition for allowance. However, if the Examiner should have any comments or suggestions to help speed the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is requested to contact the Applicant's undersigned representative.

Respectfully submitted,

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